



According to Act of Parliament: June 5.th 1746.

Modern CHARACTERS.

PROTEUS has changed Sides almost as often as he has shifted Cloaths, without being much the better for any, the greater Part of his Life spent in a Variety of Follies and Extravagancies; yet his Friends say, he is not only the wisest Man, but knows more of foreign Affairs than any Man in Europe: And even the best and most serious Poet of the Age has chose him for his Hero, and celebrated him accordingly.

CICERO, whose natural Eloquence charmed a listening Senate, would, in the Middle of a serious Argument, break out into the most ridiculous Buffoonry; and talk such Stuff, as made the meanest of his Audience blush. Yet Cicero was a great Statesman, and was Master of the Art of preserving himself in Power, and of gaining a general Esteem beyond any Man we read of. This same Cicero, among many other Idlenesses, debauch'd a young Girl when he was married, and married her when he was a Widower. This double Folly, at a Time when the Blood is not in the highest Flow of Vigour, only illustrated his bright Side, and served as a Foil to his superior Wisdom.

CLODIUS, who is eternally a Girl-hunting, and would rather spend the Wealth of the Indies, if he had it, than be disappointed in an Amour, has a Balance of various good Qualities; and altho' that of paying his Debts may not be one, he, in many Respects, both speaks and thinks finely; which are Attributes not common to every great Man.

CURIO, with unbounded Avarice, is a Man of great Parts, only lessened by the Favour of Fortune;

as he grew great, they diminished; and he seems now like a Candle lighted, trembling in Sun-shine, which in the Shade shone with steady Lustre. Curio's Wisdom is not less, but the Light of Phæbus shines too strong for him, and like Semele in the Arms of Jove, perishes in divine Brightness. Folly and Wisdom center in the same Man, and unite harmoniously together; making up the Sum of Political Concord, by the blending of apparent Opposites.

ARISTOPHANES takes quite the other Side of the Question, and sparkles as he falls. If he was covetous to acquire, it was only that he might have the Pleasure of being more extravagant. His Follies could only render him necessitous; his Wisdom only support him. One made him want a Place, the other got him many Places; till being at last arrived to the Summit of his Pretensions, he steadily persisted, and wisely made Hay while the Sun shone: But alas to what End! His Acquisitions vanished like Vapours before its Lustre; his Cash rarified into Æther, and blended with the Elements. He declines gradually with the Day, and with old Age goes downwards; and it's highly probable, that at the finishing of his Mortal State, will not have a Penny left to pay for his Passport into the Immortal: And consequently, with all his Mortal Wisdom, must rove on this Side Styx a lonely, helpless, solitary Ghost.

MUSÆUS, whilst under the Hands of the Fates, struggled, scolded, and raved himself into Asses Milk Diet; but no sooner Destiny removed its Paws, than, as if Thunder had impelled him, he was struck

Dumb. He may by this Turn acquire more Flesh, but never more Spirits or Reputation. He may pay others, what he can get to pay them with; and solace himself in the Acquisition of a chance Fortune; but will never in this Road be able to pay what he owes his Country. Wisdom in him was profound Policy; but a Man can never be forgiven the forgetting of himself, by cheating his Country of a Patriot; who, in Want was steady, and in Affluence a Turn-Coat.

ATTICUS, the Friend and Successor of Cicero, wants some of his good Qualities, as well as of his bad ones; but of the last, has some of his own, that makes him ample Amends. I congratulate him on the Congratulations of that Part of his Country, whose Business it is to make the French rich, at the Expence of their loving Neighbours; and on the Removal of that terrible Fellow, who endeavoured to hinder it. If all the World don't know what this means, Atticus does; and Atticus can't help publishing it.

Atticus has really many good Qualities, but his Folly is, that he don't think. Cards and other Idlenesses may take him off from that; but then how do these aid his Wisdom, when they even don't blend into a Political Concord; for nothing can harmonise that don't mix. Wisdom is a dull, rough Utensil, unpolish'd by a Spice of blended Folly; and though it makes a Man not one Jot less a Fool, yet it renders that Character infinitely less gay, sprightly, and harmonious.